

## **Driveways, entrances, and sight distances....**

If someone wants to put in a new house or business on one of your town roads or streets:

- \*Does your town have any control over this process?
- \*Do some roads seem to have too many entrances or driveways onto them now?
- \*Is there a safety problem because the entrance is near a hill or curve without enough sight distance to see approaching vehicles?

If your town would like to take control of entrances onto your local roads, you will be getting into the field of “access management”. In traffic terms, you will be providing safe access to/from land, while conserving the ability of a road to move traffic safely and efficiently.

Why is it so important?

- 1) it increases safety by assuring predictable, well-designed, and highly visible locations for vehicles entering/exiting the road. On a higher speed road, fewer access points means fewer conflicts and safer travel.
- 2) it controls public costs by improving and conserving the road’s ability to handle traffic and drainage. Poorly designed and located driveways can create road-damaging runoff and erosion and icing conditions.

As of early 2002, the MDOT has a new access management program (Title 23, Sec 704) which sets up a permit process for property owners for constructing driveways and entrances on the state’s collector and arterial highways. For a copy of the rules or to request an application form, contact the MDOT Division Office nearest you or check the web at: <http://www.state.me.us/mdot/planning/bureauweb/accesslinks.htm>

For local roads, most of Maine’s “state urban compact” communities, have their own “entrance” policies or ordinances which may be a good resource to develop for your town. Otherwise, the Center has a nice publication produced by the Vermont Local Roads Program. It’s FREE and available by calling the Center at 624-3270. In the near future, the Center will be publishing its own publication and “model ordinance” for use by Maine towns.